



from the Missouri Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education,
Division of Special Education

Issues in EDUCATION

Please copy and route to your staff

State & District-wide Assessments of School Achievement

What IEP team
members need to
know...



This Technical Assistance Bulletin will provide IEP team members with the information they need to make decisions about each child's participation in these assessments.



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Why are students with disabilities required to participate in the Missouri Assessment Program and district-wide assessments of student achievement?

Participation of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments of student achievement is required by a number of state and federal laws and regulations. But more importantly, it sets the expectation that students with disabilities can achieve the standards that have been established for all students. Participation in these assessments should lead to improved teaching and learning. Participation of students with disabilities will also allow local district administrators and boards of education to consider the needs of all students when they make instructional decisions and set policy (i.e., curriculum adoptions, staffing patterns, professional development). It is important to expect students with disabilities to meet the high standards and expectations that have been set for all students using the accommodations and supports provided by

Both the passage of Missouri's Outstanding Schools Act (OSA) and the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 have called for a greater focus on the accountability of educational services for students with disabilities. The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), which accredits school districts in Missouri, uses the performance of **all** students on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) subject area assessments as one measure of performance. The Division of Special Education has identified the performance of students with disabilities on the MAP as one of its Performance Goals as required by IDEA. This focus on educational achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities is intended to direct attention to the accommodations and supports needed by students with disabilities to access and progress in the general education curriculum. Participation in state and district-wide assessments goes hand in hand with access to the general education curriculum.

special education. It is also important to remember that the majority of students with disabilities identified under IDEA do not have significant cognitive disabilities which would inhibit their ability to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



?2 In general, what decisions do the IEP team have to make regarding a student's involvement in state and district-wide assessments?

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must make decisions about how students with disabilities participate in assessment programs. These decisions include whether a student will participate in the subject area assessments or the alternate assessment that comprise the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). When making the decision about participation in the MAP subject area assessments, the IEP team must also consider the student's need for accommodations. If they decide that the MAP subject area assessments are not appropriate for an individual student, even with the use of accommodations, then the student must participate in the MAP-Alternate (MAP-A).

The IEP must address the same considerations for district-wide assessments of student achievement. If the IEP team determines that a child will not

participate in a district-wide assessment (or a part of an assessment), the IEP must state why the assessment is not appropriate and how the child will be assessed.

In making these decisions, the IEP team has the responsibility and authority to determine the individual accommodations that a student needs to support and ensure his or her participation in state and district-wide assessments of student achievement. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) or local school districts cannot limit the authority of an IEP team in the selection of accommodations.

If a specific accommodation is not on the list of accommodations in the Examiner's manual, the accommodation can still be used. See question 5 for further information about documentation of these decisions. All accommodation decisions made by the IEP team must be documented in the IEP.

?3 Do students with disabilities have to take all parts of the MAP?

Students with disabilities must take all of the MAP subject area assessments **or** the MAP-A. Students may not participate in **some** of the subject area assessments **and** the MAP-A. This policy is based on the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) Memorandum 0024, which is referenced at the end of this document.

The MAP-A has been developed to allow **all** students with disabilities to participate in the State Assessment Program. The MAP-A is designed for the student

whose educational program centers on the functional application of the Show-Me Standards. The student's IEP team must agree that the student meets all five of the criteria outlined in the eligibility checklist for MAP-A. These criteria are listed on page 3. **Beginning in FY04 the MAP-A is administered to eligible children who are in grades 4, 8, and 11.** It is expected that no more than 1 to 2 percent of the total district enrollment at a specific grade level would participate in the MAP-A. Thus, if a district has approximately 500 students enrolled at each elementary grade, no more than 5 to 10 students would be expected to participate in MAP-A at age 9.

?4 What assessments must be considered at the district level?

District-wide assessments include those assessments that are part of the district assessment program used to determine levels of student achievement. Districts should provide IEP teams with a list of the district-wide assessments administered in their districts and the grades at which they are administered so the IEP team can make participation decisions. If an IEP team determines that a particular district-wide assessment (or a part of that assessment) is not appropriate for an individual student, the IEP team must document in the IEP why the assessment is not appropriate and how the student will be assessed.

When determining alternative assessment methods for district-wide assessments, the IEP team must consider the purpose of the district-wide assessment and make sure the alternate method of

Eligibility Criteria for MAP-A

The five criteria that a student with a disability must meet to be eligible for MAP-A are:

1. The student has significant problems acquiring new skills, and acquisition of skills must be taught in very small steps.
2. The student does not keep pace with peers, even with the majority of students in special education, with respect to the total number of skills acquired.
3. The student's educational program centers on the functional application of the Missouri Show-Me Standards.
4. The IEP team, as documented in the IEP, does not recommend participation in the MAP subject areas, or taking the MAP with accommodations.
5. The student's inability to participate in the MAP subject area assessments is not primarily the result of excessive absences; visual or auditory disabilities; or social, cultural, language, or economic differences.



assessment will be consistent with that purpose. In other words, if the purpose of the district-wide assessment is to assess reading ability, the alternative method must also result in an assessment of the student's reading ability. The MAP-A is not an appropriate alternate to a district-wide assessment of student achievement.

?₅ What do IEP teams need to know in order to make effective decisions about a student's participation and accommodations?

It is important that IEP teams know how each of the three sessions of the MAP subject assessments have been constructed and what skills students will need to take the test. One session is mul-

tipple choice and requires students to "bubble in" their answers. The constructed response and performance event sessions require written responses. Being familiar with the nature of the assessment items on the MAP and district-wide assessments will assist teams in making decisions about accommodations. DESE has a number of "released" assessment questions that IEP teams can review to assist them in making these decisions. More information can also be found on DESE's web site: <http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divimprove/curriculum/releaseditems/>

Each IEP team must determine what accommodations, if any, the student needs in order to participate in the state or district-wide assessment. Accommodations are used to "level the playing field" and improve the accuracy of

assessment by removing the negative impact of the disability on test performance but not to give an unfair advantage. In this way a student with a disability can demonstrate what he knows and is able to do. The IEP team has the responsibility to determine needed accommodations.

Typically, the accommodations needed by students with disabilities in a testing environment are also used during classroom assessments. IEP teams need to be sensitive to the use of accommodations and involve students, especially older students, in making accommodation decisions. Districts need to make every attempt to administer accommodations in a sensitive and discreet manner.

Accommodations that are determined necessary by the IEP team must be documented in the IEP and the Special Codes Section (SCS) on the inside back cover of each student's test book. The state has identified a list of common accommodations that might be needed by students with disabilities. Each of the accommodations has a code that must be documented on the SCS. These codes provide the state with data to answer a variety of questions about the use of accommodations, such as which accommodations are being used by students with disabilities and what percentage of students are using accommodations. Table 1 is an example of the list that was used in the spring 2002 administration of MAP. If an IEP team determines the need for an accommodation that is not on this list, the accommodation must be identified in the IEP and coded as "Other" on the SCS. Any accommodation used requires students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

?6 What scores are generated by the MAP subject assessments and what impact does the use of accommodations have on these scores?

The MAP subject area assessments generate several scores.

Two are especially important to IEP team decision-making:

1. Achievement Level score
2. National Percentile score

Missouri uses five Achievement Levels to describe a student's performance on the MAP subject assessments:

1. Step 1
2. Progressing

3. Nearing Proficient
4. Proficient
5. Advanced

In order for **any** student to generate an Achievement Level score, he or she must attempt at least one response in Session 1, one response in Session 2, and at least five responses or one correct response in Session 3, the Terra Nova portion, which is often refer-

TABLE 1
Accommodation Codes for IEP Students

Administration Accommodations (Admin)	
Code	Code
01 Braille edition of assessment	07 Using amplification equipment (e.g., hearing aid or auditory trainer)
02 Large-print edition of assessment	08 Using assistive device
03 Using magnifying equipment	09 Using visual aids
04 Oral reading of assessment	10 Other
05 Signing of assessment (directions)	
06 Paraphrasing	
Timing Accommodations (Time)	
20 Extend time allotted to complete Session 3 - Part I	
21 Administer test using more than three testing periods	
22 Other	
Response Accommodations (Resp)	
(Use of any alternative response must be transcribed directly into the test book for scoring)	
30 Using typewriter for responding	37 Using braille
31 Using computer/word processor for responding	38 Using communication device
32 Pointing to response	39 Using a calculator
33 Giving response orally	40 Using an abacus
34 Giving response in sign language	41 Using arithmetic tables
35 Dictating to a scribe	42 Using graph paper
36 Taping student response	44 Other
Setting Accommodations (Set)	
50 Testing individually	
51 Testing with small group	
52 Testing with teacher facing student (hearing-impaired)	
53 Other	

[Shading on pages 4 & 5 is used only to indicate where paper should be trimmed]

Additional resources



OSEP Memorandum 00-24, *Questions and Answers about Provisions in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 Related to Students with Disabilities and State and District-wide Assessments*. [On-line]. Available: www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP.
<http://www.dssc.org/frc/AssessmentQ&A.pdf>

red to as the multiple choice portion of the test. Students who do not make such response attempts do not generate an Achievement Level score and are counted in a "Level Not Determined" category. Students who take the MAP-A are also counted in the "Level Not Determined" category.

Students who use any accommodations and make the response attempts described above will generate an Achievement Level score on the MAP subject assessments. These scores will be included in the building and district achievement level scores for all students.


The MAP subject area assessments also generate a score that is referred to as a National Percentile (NP). This score is based solely upon the student's performance in Session 3 (the Terra Nova Survey/multiple choice portion of the assessment). **This NP score can be used to compare an individual student's performance with other students in the nation. However, in order to make such a comparison, the student must take this portion of the assessment under the conditions in which the Terra Nova Survey was normed.** For example, this portion of the assessment is timed. In order for a student to generate an NP that can

be compared with other students, extended time cannot be used as an accommodation. However, if the IEP team determines that extended time is a needed accommodation for this portion of the test, then that extended time is permitted. **The IEP team members need to understand that the NP generated under these conditions cannot be interpreted as or compared with an NP generated under standard conditions.**

The Terra Nova Survey portion of the MAP subject area assessments is administered in a group setting. Students receive directions from a test administrator and then independently complete the test. Standard instructions for administering the Terra Nova Survey can be found in the Test Examiner's manual. IEP team members can access this manual from their district test coordinator. Any administration other than what is described would produce an NP that could not be interpreted as an NP generated under standard conditions.

The district has the same obligation to identify those accommodations that will and will not impact a student's score or results on district-wide assess-

ments. IEP teams and parents need to understand the implications of their decisions and how those decisions might impact individual students when considering accommodations for district-wide assessments.

 Can questions on the MAP be paraphrased for IEP students and can teachers preview the MAP test prior to testing?

Paraphrasing is a possible accommodation. This applies only to students with an IEP. The use of paraphrasing, as an accommodation on the MAP and classroom assessments, must be noted in the student's IEP; but should be done cautiously and selectively so as not to restrict a student's opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Special education teachers may preview a MAP test to preselect items for an IEP student to attempt. This procedure must be an accommodation addressed in a student's IEP and the review must be done under the supervision of the building test coordinator. These



test items are privileged information and are not to be shared with other teachers. Other teachers are not to review the test prior to the first day of testing.

?8 Can parents request that their child not participate in the MAP or MAP-A? What about non-participation requests by parents for district-wide assessments?

All students enrolled in a public or charter school are expected to participate in the MAP. There is no procedure for a parent to request that their child not participate in the MAP. (MAP includes both the subject area assessments and the alternate assessment.)

If the district has a policy and procedure for parents to request that their children not participate in district-wide assessments, then that same procedure must be available to parents of children with disabilities. If no policy exists for parents to request nonparticipation for nondisabled students, then districts may not have a policy for students with disabilities.

?9 Is out-of-grade-level testing allowed in the MAP?

No. In order to provide coherent information about students who score at Step 1, student achievement, and attainment of state standards at specific grade levels, students must be assessed in the grade level to which they are assigned.

?10 Are students who are receiving homebound services, enrolled in vocational schools, juvenile detention centers, or placed in approved private agencies or other out-of-district placements by local districts required to take the MAP and district-wide assessments? What about home-schooled students?

All homebound students and students receiving services in other agencies must be included in the MAP testing. Depending on



the student's situation, testing may have to occur off campus. If this occurs, test security measures should be cleared with the building test coordinator. If any of these students do not take the MAP, a Student Information Sheet (SIS) or Student Information Form (SIF) should be completed and the "absent all three sessions" bubble marked.

Home-schooled students fall in a different category. Honoring a parental request for a home-schooled student to be included in the MAP testing is a local district decision. The MAP testing of home-schooled students does need to take place in one of the district buildings. The district may obtain a special home-school packet from CTB to ensure the student's score is not reported in the building or district group results. This packet may be obtained by contacting CTB/McGraw-Hill at (800) 544-9868.

The development and printing of this material was supported entirely by federal funds appropriated in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This bulletin will be distributed periodically from the Division of Special Education, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102; fax [573] 526-4404, phone (573) 751-0699. This bulletin is made possible under contract by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which complies with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Services are provided without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or physical or mental disability. If you have needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need this publication in an alternative format, notify the Center for Innovations in Special Education at (573) 884-7275, (800) 976-CISE (MO only), or Relay MO (800) 735-2966 (TDD). Efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.